

REPORT FROM THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Never doubt that a small group
Of thoughtful, committed citizens
Can change the world.
Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.
-Margaret Mead

And just look at the groups of thoughtful, committed citizens we know and appreciate in this wonderful community we call Alton! "Light Up Night," December 2nd this year was the best ever! Driving into town, the sense of civic pride, community participation, old-fashioned fun and palpable anticipation of the visit with Santa was in the air! Walking down the street, it was pleasant to linger on the sidewalks, chatting with friends and neighbors. It was easy to meet new people as we waited in line for refreshments – homemade cookies – in front of Town Hall. It was easy to chat with people with common interests in the Gilman Museum, and the sounds of the antique piano, played expertly by Barbara Moulton, wafted in the air. Out onto the street, adding to the ambiance, we could chat with the policeman who were out meeting the citizens and with members of the Alton Business Community, who were sponsoring Open House events and even a hayride! Light Up Night is a tradition brought to us by the Parks and Recreation Department and, truly, hats off to everyone there who worked hard to organize and set up in advance of the night that Alton's residents have grown so fond of.

Groups of dedicated, thoughtful, committed citizens are busy in every aspect of our municipal government, and in all of the departments that make up every aspect of life in our town. By profession, or avocation or volunteer interests and passions, we all benefit from the efforts of these groups of citizens.

The Board of Selectmen oversees the activities of all the factions of life in town. We have worked hard this year with each department to manage your tax dollars with your best interests in our hearts and minds. From the new road standards and new requirements for cisterns in subdivisions, we are looking out for your safety and ease and accessibility of all areas in town.

We have worked hard with the New Hampshire Department of Transportation to identify areas of concern along Route 28, so that as Alton grows, the state is aware of our needs and our focus on making the roadways as safe as we can. We were pleased with the work on new guard railing along Rollins Road so that coming in and out of town in any weather or traffic condition is now as safe as it used to be.

Looking forward, your Board of Selectmen has been listening and working hard with Scott Simonds to make sure that our Transfer Station remains efficient, cost-effective and up-to-date for the needs of our growing community.

We have been encouraged by the efforts the Planning Board has been making to work on the updated Master Plan so that we can encourage new housing and business

development in mindful, conscientious ways. We appreciate the numerous hours that the Planning Board and Zoning Board members put in for meetings, workshops and public hearings.

We are pleased to nominate members of the Downtown Revitalization Committee and Beach Restoration Committee and eagerly listen to Selectman Shibley's reports this year about how these projects are coming along. Our hats off to congratulate the volunteers on these committees who are working hard, year-round, to make Alton a colorful, vibrant place to live. It will be a wonderful year when we can see photos of people relaxing on the *completed* beach or see our photos of people relaxing in the *completed* B&M Railroad Park in our Annual Report. At this time, it will be interesting to see what new projects are underway, with new committees being encouraged by the Board of Selectmen.

We encourage all of you to drop by Town Hall to meet all of the people who serve you there. Notice renovations and updates made to the building and take time to let the Board of Selectmen know what you are interested in and what you would like to see us doing to better serve you. Make use of the town government's website, www.alton.nh.gov, and from there, check the links so that you can learn what's available from the site linking you to all departments and areas of interest.

Most of all, we hope that you are all involved in our community in whatever ways you find most comfortable and beneficial to you!

Respectfully Submitted,

Cris Blackstone
Chairman, Alton Board of Selectmen